Dear Election Official:

Congratulations on your election or appointment, and welcome to the community of Michigan election officials. The following pages contain a great deal of important information to help you get started in your new role, so please read all of this material carefully and save it for future reference. We would like to make you aware of Bureau of Elections (BOE) staff support, resources and training available to assist you in fulfilling your duties. We would also like to ask you to complete a few initial tasks to help us communicate with you and your staff.

Resources for Election Officials

Elections eLearning **Center:** *https://mi.learnport.org/elections* *electionselearning@michigan.gov*
BOE has an online training site dedicated to election officials. It contains a multitude of web-based training and searchable resource materials, the ability to sign up online for in-person training, and electronic versions of user/training manuals, procedural guidelines, copies of BOE/clerk communications, election and filing deadline calendars, and much more. Each staff member will need their own login ID. You can request your login credentials on the BOE website, under *Information for Election Administrators* or from the eLearning Center login *page.* Please save this site to your favorites or bookmarks and check regularly for updated information.

Bureau of Elections Website: *www.michigan.gov/elections*
The BOE website also provides you with access to some of the information related to election administration found in the eLearning Center. The *Information for Election Administrators* page is designed for clerks and their staff members, and contains most of the information found in the eLearning Center to assist you in your role as clerk.

Bureau of Elections Staff Support:
BOE offers a variety of staff resources to assist you, including:

- **Election Specialists: (800) 292-5973, (517) 373-0065**
Please call this number to speak to an Election Specialist who can assist you with election administration, procedural, or legal questions.

- **QVF Help Desk: (800) 310-5697, (517) 241-0340,** admin4@miqvf.org
Please call this number to speak with a Qualified Voter File (QVF) Help Desk Analyst who can assist you with technical issues related to the QVF, Election Management Portal (EMP), and Electronic Pollbook (EPB) support. (More detailed information on these programs can be found below.)

- **BOE Email Address:** elections@michigan.gov
If you have a question or request for BOE, you may also email it to this address, which is monitored daily and is specifically designed for use by the clerk community.

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Updated as of 1.9.2014

MERIT election email System for BOE / Clerk Communication:
The Bureau of Elections regularly communicates with local clerks through the web based MERIT election email system (https://webmail.merit.edu.), a state-provided email account for every Michigan clerks. **We cannot over-emphasize the importance of using and checking this email system on a daily basis!**

In addition to regular emails, communications labeled ***News Update*** are sent to MERIT election email on a weekly basis. The ***News Update*** provides election officials with valuable information throughout the year and specific election reminders as elections draw near.

Your MERIT election email address is also listed under clerk contact information on the Michigan Voter Information Center www.michigan.gov/vote website. The Michigan Voter Information Center (MVIC) is a website designed to assist voters (see more details about this site on page 3). Therefore, your MERIT election email account may receive emails from voters regarding voter registration and absent voter (AV) ballot requests, including military and overseas voters – making it imperative for this account to be accessed **daily**, especially during certain pre-election periods when an AV ballot requests must be honored within 24 hours. **Clerks without internet access must coordinate with their county clerk for regular access to this information.**

If you need your jurisdiction's username and password, please call the QVF Help Desk. Account preferences may also be set up to automatically notify an alternate email or forward a copy of each MERIT election email to another email account(s) of your choice. NOTE** The forwarding emails must be updated with every staff change. (Instructions are available in the eLearning Center.) Also available in the eLearning Center are past copies of the News Updates (formerly known as *News You Can Use* or *Election News*) for your reference.

Systems for Election Officials

QVF Software & Elections Management Portal:
The Qualified Voter File (QVF) is a computerized statewide voter registration and election management system that links election officials throughout the State of Michigan to a fully automated, interactive voter registration database.

If your jurisdiction already uses QVF election administration software, determine which setup you have:

> **1) QVF (Replica)** was traditionally delivered to larger jurisdictions through one or more state-issued server computers. A local administrator creates local user accounts and may install QVF client software on locally-owned machines running Windows XP. The QVF server machine(s) should always be left on so the automatic "replication" or server update process can take place overnight. The server may access the internet through Michnet dial-up service or your local area network.

> **2) QVF Lite** is installed on a locally-owned computer running Windows XP or Windows 7 and connects directly to the servers over the internet in real time. The QVF Help Desk manages user accounts after each user has attended QVF training and signs a user agreement. Contact the QVF Help Desk to remove a user and for other support. Schedule hands-on QVF training for new users via the eLearning Center.

> NOTE: The State is planning an upgrade to permit both QVF Replica sites and QVF Lite sites to use the Windows 7 operating system. This upgrade should occur during the 1st quarter of 2014. You will see more announcements on this upgrade through BOE's regular *News Updates.*

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Elections Management Portal (EMP) is a web based application
(https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/emp/pages/login.aspx) that can be used by all Clerks to look up voter
registration information state-wide and generate an electronic AV ballot for a military and overseas
voter. For **non-QVF users**, the EMP is also used to track AV ballots and download the Electronic
Pollbook software.

The EMP system can also be accessed directly from the *Information for Election Administrators* page
on www.michigan.gov/elections.

Each EMP user in your office must use a unique username and password. Contact the QVF Help Desk
whenever a user should be added or removed from the system. EMP user instructions can be found in
the eLearning Center.

Jurisdictions without QVF or QVF Lite must coordinate with their county clerk for voter registration
maintenance, precinct lists, clerk contact information updates, and other QVF services. Jurisdictions
wishing to gain access to QVF Lite must have a high-speed internet connection and a computer that
meets the requirements noted above. Users must attend QVF training and submit signed user
agreements before the installation can be completed.

QVF Support and Resources: The *QVF Desktop Reference* user manual is available in the eLearning
Center. In addition, you may sign up for QVF Hands On training classes in the eLearning Center.
Contact the QVF Help Desk for technical QVF support and maintenance requests.

Electronic Pollbook (e-Pollbook or EPB):
The Bureau of Elections developed the EPB system, which can be used in the polling place on election
day to look up and process voters, issue ballots and generate precinct reports electronically, as
opposed to a traditional paper-based system. Almost 90% of the precincts in Michigan are now using
the EPB system. EPB software can be downloaded from QVF or the EMP and loaded onto a laptop
computer prior to each election. Once the EPB software is loaded on the laptop, the software allows
election inspectors to look up a voter's registration record, confirm their registration is correct, and
assign a ballot to that voter, essentially automating the typical paper process. EPB also assists in
directing voters to the proper polling location if they have arrived to the wrong precinct. After the
election is complete, the EPB software will generate reports to complete the official precinct record and
a voter history file that can be uploaded into QVF or the EMP to update voter history in a matter of
minutes.

Free laptop computers are available to EPB users via a Federal grant program funded by the Help
America Vote Act (HAVA). Jurisdictions that are not yet using the EPB system may sign up to
implement the program and receive EPB laptops in 2014. Grant information can be found at
www.michigan.gov/elections ; *Information for Election Administrators; Electronic Pollbook (EPB)
Information.* For jurisdictions already using EPB, hands-on training is offered weekly in Lansing – sign
up via the eLearning Center. In addition to the information found on *Electronic Pollbook (EPB)
Information* webpage, the eLearning Center offers several EPB video tutorials.

Michigan Voter Information Center (MVIC – www.michigan.gov/vote **):**
The Michigan Voter Information Center is a handy tool for use by the public and the clerk community,
providing a wide variety of information on voting. Voters can enter their own personal information to
determine their voter registration status, polling place location, dates for upcoming elections, voter
registration deadlines, sample ballots prior to each election, and current status on absent voter (AV)
ballot requests and returned ballots. There is also a *"Find Your Clerk"* function which can be used to
obtain contact information for any clerk statewide. New clerks can update the information appearing on
this site by making a simple change in QVF. Please check the clerk contact information in MVIC, and
contact the QVF Help Desk if you need assistance in updating your information.

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MVIC also has several links to other key topic areas that are useful to voters, including voter registration, absentee voting, military and overseas voting and more. The MVIC site is also now available as a mobile application, which can be accessed by any smart phone or other mobile device.

Training for Election Officials

The Bureau of Elections offers several training opportunities in a variety of methods, including:

Election Officials' Accreditation Training:
Michigan election law, MCL 168.31(k), stipulates that all newly elected and appointed county, city and township election officials must complete an accreditation process. The Bureau of Elections currently offers a two-day new election official accreditation course that covers a wide variety of topics and includes an online, open-book test. Training dates, registration information, and training materials are available in the eLearning Center.

In addition, MCL 168.33(4) now requires the completion of a continuing education program every two years to maintain accreditation. This curriculum is being developed and will contain several distinct modules, which will include both in-person and online training classes beginning in 2014. Availability of these modules will be announced via *News Updates.*

Electronic Pollbook Training:
Clerks in jurisdictions using EPB must attend a training session. If your jurisdiction is new to EPB, initial training is scheduled by BOE when you first receive EPB laptops otherwise hands-on EPB sessions are available most Wednesday mornings at the Bureau of Elections offices in Lansing and can be reserved through the eLearning Center. In addition to the several online training modules available in the eLearning Center, a full online EPB training module will also be available in the near future for those interested in ongoing refresher training.

QVF Hands-on Training:
Training is required for all new QVF Lite users and is available for all existing QVF users. Sessions are scheduled each Thursday morning at the Bureau of Elections offices in Lansing and can be reserved via the eLearning Center. Occasional regional training sessions will be offered and will be announced via a News Update sent to MERIT election email. In addition, a full online QVF training series will also be available in the near future for those interested in ongoing refresher training.

Elections eLearning Center:
As stated above, the eLearning Center is an online training site dedicated to election officials. It contains a multitude of web-based training and searchable resource materials, the ability to sign up online for in-person training, and a variety of tools.

Other Training Courses:
The Bureau of Elections also conducts specialized training courses on a variety of topics as needed. Additional training courses are also offered during the even-numbered election years, including *Train the Trainer*, to assist clerks in training their precinct inspectors; and *Election Cycle* training, covering all pertinent statewide election issues, offered in every county of the state.

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Initial Tasks for New Clerks

There are some initial tasks we ask that you complete immediately, including:

- **Obtain your Merit election email username and password** from your staff or the QVF Help Desk. Check Merit election email daily at http://webmail.merit.edu or set up notification messages or forwarding to other email address(es) of your choice. Directions can be found in the eLearning Center.

- **Verify the Clerk Contact information listed in the Michigan Voter Information Center** (www.michigan.gov/vote ; under "*Find Your* Clerk"). If you have access to QVF, you may update this information in QVF (*Data Maint – Clerk Contacts*). If you do not have access to QVF, contact your County Clerk or the QVF Help Desk to make necessary changes.

- Request your login ID for the **Michigan Elections eLearning Center.** Complete the online form at www.michigan.gov/elections ; *Information for Election Administrators* or on the login page at https://mi.learnport.org/elections.

- **Familiarize yourself with the eLearning Center** once you have your login information at https://mi.learnport.org/elections.

- **Familiarize yourself with the BOE website** at www.michigan.gov/elections ; *Information for Election Administrators.*

- **Immediately report staffing changes for QVF users** to the QVF Help Desk.

- **Obtain an EMP username and password** from the QVF Help Desk for yourself and each deputy or staff member you wish to access the system.

- **Schedule QVF training**, if appropriate, for yourself and each new deputy or staff member. This can be done through the eLearning Center.

- **Verify the names and addresses of your polling locations in QVF**. This can be completed once you obtain QVF training, or through your county if your county manages QVF for your jurisdiction.

- **Continue to watch Merit election email** for additional training opportunities, important announcements, and the weekly News Update Newsletter.

Good luck as you begin this exciting and important new role. Please don't hesitate to contact the Bureau of Elections via the sources mentioned above, and remember to monitor your MERIT election email account daily!